



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

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USAID Newsletter

General News

Dear Friends and Colleagues! Happy Holidays and New Year!

The Holiday Season and New Year always provide a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the accomplishments of the past year and look for new opportunities for the coming one. 2012 was the 20th anniversary of the partnership between the United States and the Kyrgyz Republic. During this entire period, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has been working in partnership with the Kyrgyz Government and people to enhance reforms across many sectors. At present, our work includes improving the environment for economic development, healthcare, education, judiciary system reforms, as well as parliamentary strengthening, improving transparency of the election system, youth development and other areas. I hope that our partnership and cooperation will continue to strengthen and grow for the next year and beyond. I thank everyone who works with us for their support.

Carey N. Gordon, USAID Representative

Economic Development



USAID Launches “Conservation and Adaptation in Asia’s High Mountain Landscapes and Communities” Project: USAID

Representative Gordon announced the launch of the four-year \$4.7 million regional conservation project at the Regional Global Snow Leopard Conservation Workshop held in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic on December 1-3. The project will be implemented by the World Wildlife Fund and the Snow Leopard Trust in Bhutan, India, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Nepal, and Pakistan. The project will help local communities engage in conservation of snow leopards and to stimulate greater understanding and action to protect the ecosystems upon which this wildlife depends. The project will help improve livelihoods and motivate local communities to engage in both conservation of snow leopards and prey species as well as sustainable management of high mountain landscapes. This will

strengthen community institutions and help improve management, equitable benefit sharing and access to natural resources.

Photo: representatives from different countries took part in the Regional Global Snow Leopard Conservation Workshop.



USAID Supports Improved Performance at the State Agency for Geology and Mineral Resources:

On December 20, USAID and the State Agency for Geology and Mineral Resources signed a Memorandum of Understanding to launch a Human and Institutional Capacity Development program at the agency. The USAID REFORMA Project will help the geology agency improve the business and investment climate for development of the mineral resources sector. The project will help the agency to create more efficient and transparent working processes and implement international practices as identified in the Government’s Medium-Term Development Strategy for the Mineral Resources Sector.

Photo: Carey Gordon, USAID Representative (second from left) and Ishenbai Chonuev, Director of the State Agency for Geology and Mineral Resources (next to the right) signing the Memorandum of Understanding.

Women’s Leadership in Small and Medium Enterprises Program Launched in Kyrgyzstan: USAID supports a three-year *Women’s Leadership in Small and Medium Enterprises* program in the Kyrgyz Republic in collaboration with the local partner organization Bai Tushum microfinance banking group. This new program promotes the growth of women-owned small and medium enterprises in the Kyrgyz Republic by providing capacity building, training and technical assistance.

The program will target enterprises in up to five subsectors, to include sewing and clothing for the local, Kazakh and Russian markets by enterprises in Bishkek, Osh and Jalal-Abad; production of fruits and vegetables in Chui and Osh and fruit trees in communities around Lake Issyk-Kul; beans in the Talas region for local and regional fresh markets and agro-processors; services, such as rural health clinics and child care facilities; and tourism businesses around Lake Issyk-Kul. This project will also work to strengthen local associations to ensure that these and similar services are available beyond the life of the project.



USAID Improves Access to Electricity and Street Light Services in Suzak District:

On November 6, 2012, local government officials, community leaders and USAID representatives celebrated the completed installation of a set of power transformers and street lights in the Barpy township of Suzak District in Jalalabad Oblast (province). The infrastructure project will provide 1,700 multi-ethnic residents with access to improved electric power supply and nighttime illumination. The year 2010 saw a substantial increase in electricity demands in Suzak as a result of internal migration following the June events. Electricity shortages and

frequent blackouts exacerbated tensions among the multi-ethnic communities competing for limited electricity. In response, USAID grant funds supplied two transformers, lamps, power lines, and street poles to upgrade the power distribution system in Choko-Tobo Village. The local government provided necessary permits to improve the system and ensure equitable access to electricity for the community. The Suzak Electricity Department (RES) oversaw the technical implementation of the project.



Photo 1: young girls from the local municipality greeting the participants of the public event in Barpy.

Photo 2: community representatives delegate the older man to express gratitude to USAID and implementers for improving the access to electricity and street lights.



USAID Supports Agricultural Production in the South of the Kyrgyz Republic:

On November 13-15, USAID held opening ceremonies for three cold storage facilities, a fruit and vegetable processor, and an apricot processing facility. USAID provided in-kind assistance to businesses and agricultural cooperatives in Batken and Osh Oblasts to support local economic development. Three Cooperatives, supporting over 650 farmers, received refrigeration equipment designed for chilling and storing fresh fruits and vegetables. Off-season fresh produce will be available for export to Kazakhstan and Russia. The program supported a large fruit and vegetable processor Agroplast Cooperative in the town of Kyzyl Kyia with a modern technologically-advanced juice processing line which will reach up to 400 farmers and will aid significant production growth, enabling more farmers to sell their products at competitive

prices. Two dried apricot producers, Asrankulov PE and Mol Tushum Cooperative, received apricot processing lines that will enable them to export higher quality dried apricots. Kok Chapan Cooperative received solar drying racks to improve postharvest handling of apricots. About 200 farmers are expected to be directly impacted by each of these organizations, for a total of 1,200 farmers. All of the recipients will improve product quality management and increase sales of more attractive products.

Photo: USAID Representative Carey Gordon (in the center) with the Batken Governor and city Mayor at the opening ceremonies at agricultural enterprises that were attended by media, other members of local government, project officials, and farmers.

Health and Education



U.S. Ambassador and Minister of Health Provide Joint Awards to Local Doctors:

In commemoration of World AIDS Day (December 1), U.S. Ambassador Pamela Spratlen and the Minister of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic Dinara Sagynbaeva presented awards to 15 health care workers in recognition of their commitment to providing care to groups at the highest risk of contracting HIV. The awards ceremony took place on November 28 at the Family Medicine Center #16 in Bishkek. In

order to prevent the spread of the HIV, the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) through the USAID Quality Health Care Project has provided training and technical assistance to improve access to and quality of medical care for the most at-risk populations in Kyrgyzstan. Awardees, representing care facilities in Bishkek City and Chui Province, have been selected based on surveys of local NGO outreach workers who work closely with these high-risk groups. USAID HIV projects support the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic to implement the National HIV/AIDS program and have three program objectives: increase access and availability to high-quality HIV services for most at risk populations; strengthen the capacity of institutions to plan, deliver and monitor services; and build the capacity of the public health system to advance the quality of data collected for improving policy and program planning of HIV services.

Photo: Minister of Health Dinara Saginbaeva (right) and U.S. Ambassador Pamela Spratlen awarding a certificate and present to the health care worker.



USAID Announced Results of Infection Control Contest in Issyk-Ata Rayon: On December 28, 2012, USAID, through its Quality Health Care Project, held an awards ceremony to recognize the infection prevention control improvements made in primary health care facilities in Issyk Ata District, Chui Province. At the event, USAID Representative Carey Gordon and Deputy Minister of Health Marat Kaliev awarded certificates and prizes to the contest winners for the best “Respiratory Diseases Infection Control Plans,” in which eighteen Family Group Practices in the rayon took part. The USAID Quality Health Care Project has been working with health care providers in the Issyk-Ata Rayon since April 2012. The rayon has been part of the Ministry of Health’s pilot project aimed to improve the diagnostics and treatment of tuberculosis patients. The project introduced the World Health Organization-recommended

measures to reduce the transmission of airborne illnesses. In addition to USAID sponsored training on infection control measures and technical support to help facilities develop infection control plans, the project announced a competition to encourage facility staff to actively develop their plans. Further implementation of tuberculosis infection control interventions will help Issyk-Ata Rayon health providers promptly detect TB cases and reduce the spread of respiratory infections.

Photo: Deputy Minister of Health Marat Kaliev (on right), USAID Representative Carey Gordon (in the center), and USAID Health Program Director Chynara Kamarli at the award event in the city of Kant)

Democracy and Governance



Rejuvenated Parks for a New Year in Osh City: One month before the New Year, residents of Manas-Ata, Aylmbek-Datka, Kerme-Too, Ak-Tilek, Dostuk, Ak-Buura and Japalak territorial council districts in Osh City have been celebrating newly renovated community spaces with local government officials, representatives of the United States Agency for International Development’s Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) and the local NGO “Youth of Osh”. A total of ten parks were renovated as part of the “One Million Som Yard” initiative, a partnership of the Osh Municipal Government, the “Youth of Osh” NGO and USAID. Selected through an open and transparent competition, ten communities received support for construction materials and labor from USAID, while the municipality provided topographic surveys, landscaping and garbage disposal services. “Youth of Osh” mobilized multi-ethnic communities to revitalize

the shared community spaces. “The example of our park rehabilitation will serve as a great model for the entire city,” said Aylmbek-Datka community leader Jypar Berdibayeva.

Photo: community members with children are excited to open newly rehabilitated community spaces.

USAID Supports Migrants and Vulnerable Groups of People in Southern Kyrgyzstan: USAID “Ak-Zol: The Path to Peace through Prosperity Project” provided grants to 30 local small business groups that were established by migrants and local villagers to support income-generation activities. The grants supported the peaceful coexistence and mutual cooperation among people across seven villages in three regions of southern Kyrgyzstan. The business projects support the development of sewing workshops, cattle-breeding and public catering. As the result of this business development project, 110 people from vulnerable families and migrants received employment opportunities, and through income

generation, some businesses expanded their operations by procurement of equipment and additional materials and created new employment opportunities for their community members.



USAID and International Organization for Migration (IOM) Support the Counter-trafficking Informational Campaign, Implemented by NGOs: Twelve NGOs from seven provinces of the Kyrgyz Republic combined their efforts to prevent human trafficking. From December 2012-July 2013, a large number of informational actions will be conducted to attract public attention to this problem and raise awareness of high risk activity and the consequences of illegal employment abroad. A series of theatre performances, informational actions in the street, parades, photo exhibitions and installations will be conducted. Thanks to these initiatives, more than 25,000 citizens will gain skills on how to secure themselves and their families from human trafficking.

Since 2002, 1,462 victims of trafficking (including 332 for 2011-2012) have received reintegration assistance from IOM Bishkek and its local NGO partners.



Photo 1: students-volunteers help to distribute informational materials to raise awareness among citizens.

Photo 2: thanks to NGO support, two brothers found each after being trafficked as labor migrants abroad.



USAID Supports Youth Entrepreneurship: A media tour to visit youth-led businesses took place on November 21, in Kara Balta, Chui Province. USAID, through its project *Jasa.kg*, is supporting the International Youth Foundation to teach young people how to start and run their own businesses. Media tour participants met with young entrepreneurs who have successfully participated in the Bishkek Business Club's Rural Entrepreneurship Development Course. More than 350 rural youth in Jalal-Abad, Kara-Balta, Osh and Bishkek's new settlements gained valuable business skills. Approximately 200 business plans were evaluated and 31 were selected to receive vouchers for up to \$500 each for starting their own businesses. Media tour participants visited a business focused on quilling (a form of paper art), and one providing English language courses.

Photo: Aziza Halbekova, a student in Kara Balta who completed the entrepreneurship course and received a voucher, explains her business plan. "We will introduce quilling to people in the community. It's a very popular occupation in European countries and will attract lots of young people here to devote their free time to creating pictures from paper," she said.



Photo: Carey Gordon, USAID Representative (to the right) presents a revised edition of the Civil Society Law Textbook together with ICN: University representatives

Newly Revised Edition of Civil Society Law Textbook Distributed to Universities: On December 5, USAID and the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) presented copies of the revised edition of the textbook on Non-commercial Law to the law faculties of several prominent universities in Bishkek. The presentation took place in the Juridical Institute at Kyrgyz National University (KNU). The first edition of the textbook was printed in 2006. Over the last five years, over 850 students have taken courses in Non-commercial Law. "This course gives our students a solid understanding of the civil society sector, as well as national and international good practices in this field of law. We appreciate the continued support of USAID and ICNL to develop NGO Law courses in Kyrgyzstan," said Kamila Mateeva, Head of the International and Business Law Department at KNU.



Strengthening Engagement of Civil Society Organizations with Parliament:

Parliament: On December 7, civil society organizations and parliamentarians introduced a new manual as part of an effort to teach civic society actors how to better engage with Parliament. With support from USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI), the Public Union "International Center Interbilim" presented the manual and facilitated a discussion on procedures for promoting legislation. Interbilim developed the manual to help promote wider citizen participation in public decision-making processes. "When citizens better understand

parliamentary functions and powers we can increase the number and the quality of civic initiatives that civil society organizations submit,” said Interbilim’s Jibek Koichukulova, one of the developers of the manual. The manual explains in a reader-friendly format how civil society actors can lobby more effectively during drafting and deliberation on legislation. Interbilim will provide 800 manuals in Kyrgyz language and 600 in Russian language to civil society organizations, to members of Parliament and to law faculties across the country. In addition, the International Center for Nonprofit Law (ICNL) will distribute 500 copies to lawyers in all seven oblasts that provide advisory services to non-governmental organizations in the Kyrgyz Republic.

Photo: Interbilim facilitated discussions to promote citizen participation in public decision-making processes.



Culture Club and Youth Center Renovated in Maevka: On November 9, residents and youth from Maevka village in Sokuluk district celebrated the opening of a newly rehabilitated Culture Club and Youth Center. The USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) renovated the Maevka Culture Club and Youth Center as part of a joint initiative with UNICEF. While USAID/OTI allocated funds to improve these facilities, UNICEF and its local partner, NGO “ErEp”, will oversee the centers’ programmatic activities with support from the Ministry of Youth, Labor, and Employment of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Maevka village government. Supporting the establishment of modern and functional youth centers in multi-ethnic communities engages young people in constructive activities that support intellectual growth and promote cultural diversity while keeping the leaders of tomorrow actively engaged in a safe and welcoming environment.

Photo: U.S. Ambassador to the Kyrgyz Republic Pamela L. Spratlen, the Minister of Youth, Labor, and Employment of the Kyrgyz Republic, Mr. Aliasbek Alymkulov and UNICEF Regional Director for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States Marie-Pierre Poirier joined the Governor of Chui Province, Mr. Aibek Azyrankulov, and other local government officials to mark their collaborative effort in creating a space for youth and community engagement.

For more information about USAID in the Kyrgyz Republic contact:

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